T O P I C S I N E S C H A T O L O G Y

By

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T O P I C S I N E S C H A T O L O G Y

I. THE CONDITION OF THE SOUL IN THE INTERMEDIATE STATE
II. THE SECOND COMING OF CHRIST p. 18
III. ETERNITY

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Method of Study:

1. Exegetical study of pertinent Scripture passages.
2. Organization of notes. Note-books to be submitted.
3. Assigned and recommended collateral reading.
4. One term-paper of approximately 5 000 words. List complete bibliography, use primary and secondary sources, and follow the standard rules for term-papers, e.g., margin, foot-notes, etc. Consultation periods and bibliography available.

Topics for term-papers.

1. The hope of the church concerning the blessed condition of the departed believers as expressed in the Lutheran Hymnal (and Agenda).
2. Christ's descent into hell with special reference to the purpose of the descent.
3. The Immortality of the soul.
4. No salvation after death.
5. The cause and nature of temporal death.
6. Chiliasm is a this-worldly doctrine.
7. Exegetical treatise of Revelation 20.
8. Dispensationalism is based on a literalistic interpretation of Scripture.
9. The imminence of the Lord's second coming.
10. There is only one resurrection of the body.
11. There is no contradiction between Romans 14, 10 and John 3, 18.
12. I believe in the resurrection of the body.
13. The revelation of the Antichrist.

(With consent of the instructor additional topics may be selected.)

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Approach to Eschatology.

1. Conversion, justification, adoption, etc., are complete in this life. Acts. 26, 18; 1 Peter 2, 9.10; Luke 18, 14; Rom. 4, 25 - 5, 1a; 1 John 3, 1.2a.

2. Our salvation is not fully accomplished in this life.

   a. Sanctification, theological knowledge, far from perfect. Rom. 7, 18-23; Gal. 5, 13.16.17; Phil. 3, 12-14; - - 1 Cor. 13, 9-12; 1 Peter 1, 10-12.

b. Tribulations; infirmity of our bodies. 2 Cor. 5, 1-4; Rom. 8, 19-23; Acts 14, 22; 1 John 3, 2b.

c. Danger of falling from faith. Matth. 24, 11-13; Romans 11, 20; 1 Cor. 10, 12.

3. All Christians experience an earnest longing for heaven.

a. This is the natural fruit of faith. Christians realize the difference between themselves and the world. John 17, 11. 14. 16. 18. 1 Peter 2, 11 (pilgrims); Hebrews 13, 14. Christians long to be with Christ. Phil. 1, 20-23; 3, 20; Titus 2, 13. Col. 3, 4.

b. The heavenly longing must be nourished. 1 Thess. 4, 18.

(Study texts exegetically. Adduce additional passages!)

4. We experience great difficulty when defining and describing the future life.

a. Our finite minds cannot grasp the infinite joys of the blessed. Luke 9, 33. 2 Cor. 12, 1-4; 1 Cor. 15, 42ff. 1 Peter 1, 8.

b. Christians must guard against going beyond Scripture in describing the future state.

5. Eschatology of great practical value.

a. It is an invitation to great zeal in sanctification. Col. 3, 3-5; 1 Peter 1, 13; Titus 2, 12-14. (Find more passages!) - Greater mission zeal. Matthew 24, 14. 45-51; Acts 1, 7.8.11. Rev. 3, 11.

b. Comfort and patience in tribulation. Matthew 24, 22; Luke 21, 19 and context; Rom. 8, 18. 23; 2 Cor. 4, 17; 1 Thess. 4, 13. 18.

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THE CONDITION OF THE SOUL IN THE INTERMEDIATE STATE

Selected bibliography:

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Theological Quarterly, X, 22ff.
Synodal Bericht, Illinois, 1886, 59-65.
Eckhard, Real Lexicon, S.V. Hades
Ebeling, Der Menschheit Zukunft, 1-51
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Where and What is Heaven, Concordia Theo. Monthly, IV,195-197
The Intermediate State, Luth. Quarterly, Vol. I. 268ff.
Sheol and Hades in O. and N. Test., Review and Expositor, 35, 304.
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Werner, Blicke ins Jenseits. pp. 70-116.
Brauer, Das ewige Leben.
Was Kommt nach dem Tode? Neue Kirchl. Zeitschrift, 1918, 87.
Th. Traub, Von den letzten Dingen (1928)
C. Stange, Das Ende Aller Dinge (1930)
P. Althaus, Die Letzten Dinge (1933)

Introduction: Difficulty of solving problem

1. Scripture directs our thoughts primarily to Judgment Day and Eternity. Phil. 3,20.21; 1 Cor. 1,7; Col. 3,4; 1 Thess. 4, 13ff. etc. Relatively few passages dealing with the intermediate state.

2. Man consists of body and soul, and in this life they are dependent upon each other. In death body and soul are separated. Being bound by space, time, causality, we have no means of forming adequate concepts concerning the soul's mode of existence in the intermediate state.

Examination of Scripture passages dealing with intermediate state.
(All passages are to be studied exegetically. Observe context.)

1. Sheol

(Etymology is uncertain. Gesenius: The term is peculiar to the Jews; is not Assyrian, i.e., to settle, sediment. -- -- Hupfeld: From stems denoting lacking erectness, hence, declivity, chasm. - Luther: From shalach, to demand, hence a place which is never satisfied. Prov. 27,20; 30,15.16; Is. 5,14.)

a. Designation of a specific locality: Job 11,7.8; Ps. 139, 8; Amos 9,2. (Prov. 15,24).

b. Realm of the Dead (both believers and unbelievers.) Gen. 37,35; 42,38; 44,29.31; Job 7,9; 14,13; 17,13. 16. (Cf. 3,17-19; 10,20-22; Ps. 88,10-12;) 89, 48; (115,17;) 116,3. Eccl. 9,10; Song of Sol. 8,6; 1 Kings 2, 6.9. (Cf. also Ps. 49,14.15.16; 141,7.)

c. Hell as realm of the damned. The following passages require careful study. The context does not always determine the exact meaning.

Num. 16,30-31. Cp. Ps. 55,16. (Refute the interpretation: "Korah met a horrible death being crushed by the chasm.") Deut. 32,22 - - Job 21,13. Read the context. In his answer to Zophar Job defends himself against the charge of hypocrisy. He wants to be separate from the godless in this life. Therefore sheol is the place for the godless, whereas Job's future abiding place is described in 19,25. See also 24,19; 26,6 where sheol and abaddon are parallel. In Job sheol signifies both, the grave and hell. - - Psalm 9,17 contrast between believers and godless. Ps. 16,10 is controversial. Cf. Luther, St. L. IV, 989ff. But see also Stoeckhardt, Ausgewaehlte Psalmen, 78ff. Uncertain Ps. 6,5; 31,17; 139,8; 49, 14.15. - - Classify the passages from Proverbs, 1,12; 5,5; 7,27; 9,18; 15,24; 23,14; 27,20. -- Is. 5,11-14. Unusually large number of deaths. But since Isaiah uses sheol also as hell, 14, 9-14 and since he describes hell in 55,24; therefore the context shows that Israel's defection results not only in temporal death. Study also: Is. 14, 9-15; 28, 14-18; cp. Ps. 115,17 and Is. 38, 10-18. - - Ezekiel 31,15-18; 32, 15-27; (More than realm of the dead, for note the uncircumcized! Hab. 2,5; Hos. 13,14 and cf. 1 Cor. 15,55. -- "Sorrows of sheol," 1 Sam. 2,6; 2 Sam. 22,6; Ps. 18,5; 30,3; 86,13; 88,3; 115,17; 116,3; Jonah 2,2.

2. Maveth. Ps. 116,3; 18,4.5. Also pit, destruction, grave, darkness. Job 26,6; 28,22; 31,12; Ps. 88, 3-7. 10-12; etc.

Note: The metaphor "Sleep with thy fathers" does not describe the intermediate state. (1 Kings 22,40!) - 1 Sam. 28, 11-20 cannot be adduced for our problem.

Conclusion on basis of O. T. texts

1. Sheol as realm of the dead (Totenreich) is evident in a number of passages. These passages do not describe the intermediate state.

2. The intermediate state according to O.T.

a. Sheol denotes the place of the condemned souls. Sheol and death go hand in hand. Because of sin death is the beginning of eternal punishment, and thus sheol denotes eternal damnation. -- The souls of unbelievers enter hell immediately and in a state of consciousness. Ps. 49,14-19; Ps. 28,1-3; Is. 66,24; Cf.Mark 9,48; Deut. 32,22; Num. 16,31-33.

b. The condition of the blessed in the intermediate state is not described in detail in O.T. Passages describing the bliss: Ps. 16,11; 17,15; 27,13; 116,9; 36,9; 73,24; Is. 25,8; 35,10; 60,20; 66,22.

b. That this condition of the blessed begins immediately after death is evident (1) from New Testament passages, especially John 8, 56. (eiden, to witness the events, cf. Luke 17, 22, i.e., a perception with the senses.) and (2) from the inference, that if the condemned souls enter upon their condemnation immediately after death, then the blessed souls enter upon bliss and are in a blessed state between death and resurrection. (3) cf. also 2 Kings 2, 11.

Examination of N.T. texts.

1. Hades (Aidees and Haides)

In classical Greek - Etymology from idein and privativum a, the unseen, the one who makes unseen, the unseen land. (Cf. Anglo-Saxon "helam," to hide.) In ancient Greek mythology the concept is vague, in later Greek the term is used primarily to denote the place of the wicked.

In the Septuagint (300-150 B.C.) Sheol is translated with Hades in 61 out of 65 times, e.g. 2 Sam. 22, 6. Hades in LXX thus denotes both, the abode of disembodied spirits and the place of the damned.

In the Rabbinical Writings - A distinction is sometimes made between Hades and Gehenna, the latter always referring to a place of torment. (Cf. Bibliotheca Sacra, Oct. 1887) Various opinions among Jewish writers, e.g., Men divided into three classes, the wholly pious, the arch-wicked, and those in need of purification, and hence three places. - Hades is an intermediate state comprising both, hell and paradise. - Influence of Diaspora-Jews is noticeable, viz., the "good" enter bliss and the wicked Hades as a place of torment immediately upon death. (Cf. Josephus, Antiquities, XVIII, 1, 3. Jewish Encyclopedia, s.v. Gehenna.)

The A.V. translates hadees in 10 instances with hell. 1 Cor. 15, 55 is a variant reading. The R.V. transliterates Hades.

Matt. 11, 23 and Luke 10, 15. Context is significant. (Hades cannot denote the realm of the dead, annihilation, or a state of probation.) - - Matt. 16, 18. The contrast is between the city of God and of Satan. The expression pulai hadou (cf. Is. 38, 10) is figurative of the strength of the enemy. Hades as the abode of all disembodied spirits is contrary to the context, for the believers in the realm of the dead do not war against the Church.

Rev. 1, 18 - 6, 8 - 20, 13.14. The first passage must be read in the light of Rev. 20, 1-3. The second and third offer considerable difficulty because of the highly allegorical language. The two chief views concerning Hades: (1) Hades is here the realm of the dead, and thus death and hell are used synonymously. (2) Death and hell in 6, 8 are related in such a manner that when a terrible plague visits mankind, large numbers will go to

hell. In 20, 13.14 the sea, death, and hell must deliver their dead to be placed before the judgment-seat of Christ. After the judgment the unbelievers together with Hades will be cast into the lake of fire, v.15. - Our interest in these passages is only this, that they cannot be quoted in the interest of the modern view concerning Hades.

Acts 2, 27 and 31. Cp. note on Ps. 16, 10. Two views as a result of two translations of egkataleipoo: (1) to forsake, (as in 2 Tim. 4,10.16),i.e.,: God will not so far forsake me that I become a prey of hell. (2) To leave in a hopeless condition, (as in Rom. 9, 29)i.e.,; God will not let my soul remain in the realm of death. - The second view does justice to the parallelism with "corruption of the flesh."

There are no cogent reasons why Luke 16, 23 does not refer to hades as a place of torment. (Refute: a. Hades denotes the abode of both, believers and unbelievers, in distinction from "being in torments" and "Abraham's bosom," b. Jesus accommodated himself to popular opinion concerning "hades." Edersheim, Life and Times of Jesus the Messiah, II, 280f, describes Jewish notions; c. Story is a parable and does not teach anything concerning the condition of the soul in the intermediate state; d. The story does not happen until judgment day.)

Gehenna always denotes the place of eternal torment. (Cf. Bible Dictionary on Valley of Hinnom.) Mt. 18, 9 and Mark 9, 43-48; Mt. 5, 22.29.30; 23,15. 33. Luke 12, 5 and Mt. 10, 28. James 3, 6.

Abussos (Luke 8, 31; Rev. 9, 1.2.11; 11, 7; 17, 8; 20, 1.3) denotes the horrible abode of the devils before judgment. Likewise "hell" in 2 Pet. 2, 4 (tartarooo) - Lake of fire (Rev. 20, 14.15.) everlasting fire, (Mt. 25, 41.) outer darkness, etc., are descriptions of hell.

Conclusions concerning the state of the wicked after death:

a. Definition of terms:

(1) Hades, like Sheol, may designate the realm of the dead, embracing both Gehenna and Paradise. It is so used also by the church fathers, Ignatius, Irenaeus, Tertullian. (2) Generally Hades, Gehenna, outer darkness, abyss are used synonymously and designate the abode of condemned souls. (3) phulakee, 1 Pet. 3, 19 is the abode of the wicked, and not a prison where the souls of the blessed are detained until their resurrection.

b. The unbelievers enter upon the state of condemnation immediately upon death.

(1) The souls of the unbelieving Noachites are in hell at the time of Christ's descent, 1 Pet. 3, 19. (Cf. Stoeckhardt, Kommentar, ad locum.) The cities of [illegible] Sodom, etc. Jude v.7, are described as puros aioniou dikeen upechousai (Present participle) (2) This is fully in accord with Luke 16, 23. (3) This is according to the analogy of faith, i.e., the unbelievers are judged already (eedee kekritai, "even now" and the Perfect, John 3, 18b.)

2. Paradise and related terms describing the state of the blessed between death and resurrection.

Abraham's bosom, Luke 16, 22. 23, is the place of those who died believing the promises given to Abraham. Abraham's bosom has been "dissolved" with the coming of Christ, because the promises are fulfilled (and not, because Christ liberated the O.T. believers from the limbus patrum.) Cf. Luther, St. L. XI, 1203, I, 1757. - Note the use of singular and plural, the latter denoting undoubtedly the sum tot l of O.T. believers.

Paradise, Luke 23, 43. The malefactor entered heaven. (There is no foundation for the claim that Luke 23, 43 refers to an inferior Paradise, the abode of the O.T. believers or the prison into which Christ also went and remained (("Hades")), whereas 2 Cor. 12, 4 and Rev. 2, 7 refer to the celestial Paradise.)

Jerusalem and its inhabitants, Heb. 12, 22.23 (epouranious), Rev. 3, 12; 21, 2. 9ff, describe the conscious but indescribable joy of the perfected saints before the judgment. (Gal. 4, 26 refers to the N.T. church.)

Sleep, 1 Cor. 15, 20; 1 Thess. 4, 13-15. (Cp. also Mt. 9, 24; Mark 5, 39; Luke 8, 52; John 11, 11-14) The metaphor must not be pressed beyond the tertium comparationis. It is used to denote the saints' rest from earthly toil, Rev. 14, 13. and the Christian's peaceful departure from the terrestial to the heavenly life. (Cf. Luther, St. L., I, 1756 - 1760.)

Conclusions concerning the condition of the believers in the Intermediate State:

a. The departed believers are in a conscious and active state, Mt. 8, 11 (Sit down); 17, 3 (Moses and Elijah converse with Christ concerning the Lord's impending passion); Luke 20, 38 (Observe the context: The resurrection of the body is proved from God's name, the God of Abraham, and the argument concludes: pantes gar . autou zoosin.) John 8, 51. 56. Rev. 6, 9.10; 7, 9 - 14.

b. The bliss begins immediately upon the believer's death. Matt. 22, 32 (God of the living); 2 Cor. 4, 17 - 5, 2.8. (When the earthly tabernacle is dissolved, then oikodomeen ek theou echomen); Phil. 1, 23 (Paul cannot be speaking of his being with Christ in his resurrected body, because of to analusai kai sun Christoo einai.);Heb. 12, 23 (pneumasi dikaioon teteleiomenoon); Acts 7, 56.59.

c. This is according to the analogy of faith. (Justification is complete. - Christ is the head of the church, the members of the body are living saints on earth and in heaven. John 12, 26; 14, 3.)

d. The fact, that we cannot understand the mode of existence, does not argue against the fact that the disembodied spirits enjoy perfect bliss in the intermediate state.

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ANTITHESES

I. The Mortality of the Soul (Annihilationism)

II. "Hades" a Place of Development for Believers (Purgatory, Catholic as well as Protestant.)

III. "Hades" a Place of Second Chance for Unbelievers (Universalism, Restorationism, Gospel-preaching.)

IV. Soul-sleep (Psychopannychism, "Hades" a provisional condition.)

V. Transmigration and Reincarnation of the Soul (Karma, Nirvana.)

VI. Spiritism.

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I. The Mortality of the Soul

1. Man's soul is inherently mortal. Immortality is only conditional, being contingent on "faith in Christ" (the good life), or on obeying certain ceremonial laws of the Old Testament, or on making good use of the second opportunity during the millenium (Christadelphians, Seventh-day Adventists, Russellites, or Jehovah's Witnesses.)

The souls of the wicked shall be completely destroyed (Annihilationism), either at Christ's second coming or at the end of the millenium.

2. According to the evolution theory death was a biological factor in the world before man developed as a rational being. Therefore man is inherently mortal. There is no difference between the dying of men and other animate beings. -- Some evolutionists admit a conditioned immortality, which may be reached through a process of gradual development by meeting the various moral and spiritual conditions of a natural development.

3. The materialists deny the reality of psychic or spiritual forces and entities. There is no soul. Epicureanism is the classic example of materialism, which sought the highest good in man's release from the fears inspired by religion. Must lead to hedonism, cf. 1 Cor. 15, 32; Is. 22, 13. -- Sadducees were materialists. Matt. 22, 23ff; Acts 23, 8. (Cf. Encl. on Sadducees.) Materialism prevalent today. "The individual disintegrates and disappears as wood in fire."

4. Pantheism teaches that God is the soul of the world. Denies the existence of personal souls, and therefore of personal immortality.

5. Unitarianism (Modernism) being a this-worldly religion denies personal immortality. Admits only "Immortality of Influence", i.e., the individual "continues" after death through the influence which his good (or wicked) life exerts on the succeeding generations. (Immortality of the race, i.e., what is true of the individual is true also of a racial group. "Kultur.")

II. Hades as a place of development for the believers

A. Roman Catholic doctrine concerning Purgatory.

1. Nature and Purpose of Purgatory (cf. Popular Symbolics, Catholic Encyclopedia)

2. Origin
   From ancient pagan religions, particularly Zoroastrianism, Neo-Platonism. Also the ancient Egyptian transmigration of the soul until it found rest in perfection, or met annihilation if no progress was noted. (Consult Encyclopedia)

Clement Alexandrinus	Origen
Especially Gregory the Great	Augustine (?)

3. Rome's argument for Purgatory:

   Scripture: 2 Macc. 12, 46; Matt. 12, 32; 5, 25-26; 1 Cor. 3, 11-15; 15, 29. (Cf. Pop. Symb. and refute!)

   Traditions of the Fathers (cf. Gibbons, The Faith of our Fathers; Wilmers, Handbuch der Kath. Religion)

   Reason: That this doctrine is part of natural revelation is evident from the elements of purgatory in pagan religions.

4. Refutation:
Scripture (Doctrine of Justification).

Contradictory with Rome's doctrine of sin. (Flesh is the seat of sin, therefore the body and not the soul should be in purgatory.)

B. Purgatory of Grace. Progress in sanctification after death.
1. Only such as have courageously and successfully fought against evil in this life can say 2 Tim.4,7f. For all other Christians there must be an opportunity to be cleansed of impurity before they can enter heaven.
2. Arguments for this theory:
a. Heb. 12, 14 (agiasmon, hou chooris); 1 Cor. 3, 15; Matt. 12, 32 (arbitrary interpretation: All sins except the Sin against the Holy Ghost shall be forgiven in heaven.)
b. The Augsb. Conf. Art. XVII.(in consumatione etc.) The Final Judgment loses all meaning, if death and judgment are simultaneous.
c. Death cannot work a miracle, a magic change upon the believers who enter eternity with sins forgiven, but not eradicated. Death cannot instantaneously remove evil lust, for sin is not only in the flesh, but also in the soul (heart).

3. Representatives of this theory:
Swedenborg (The material world with its experiences continues after death in a spiritual way. There is eternal progress.)-- Universalism (All punishment is corrective. Cf. next chapter) -- J.B.Lightfoot; Bishop Martensen (who was opposed by Kierkegaard, the dialectic theologian. Cf. Barth's "theology of crisis." Kahnis (Since we must assume a second chance for those who were unable to accept Christ in this world, because they had not heard the Gospel, therefore we must also accept the idea of a purgatorial opportunity for those who are not fully prepared for heaven. Luth. Dogm. III, 553 f). H. Plitt, R.E., s.v. Hades; Dorner; Kliefoth (Synd. Bericht, Illinois, 1886, 59f.); Hengstenberg (quoted l.c.) Cf. Stier in Neue Kirchl. Zeits., 1907, 230 ff. Ebeling, Der Menschheit Zukunft, p.26ff.
4. Refutation
a. Scripture knows nothing of such a theory.
b. In contradiction to Scripture doctrines: Justification (Where there is forgiveness of sin, there IS salvation.)-- Monergism (God declares the sinner righteous. Since we cannot do anything toward our salvation in this world, therefore also nothing in the world to come. Autosoterism is mingling of Law and Gospel) -- Sanctification only through the means of grace. (This theory ascribes to punishment what can be ascribed only to the Word.)
c. The time of grace and of sanctification is restricted to the present life. John 9,4; Eph.5,16; 2 Cor. 6, 2; Gal. 6, 10; Matt. 25, 35f. (Find additional passages!)
d. We dare not underestimate the importance of death. 2. Cor. 5, 10.
e. This theory leads to carnal security. It appeals to the old adam, who instead of putting aside his "besetting sin" hopes for an opportunity to do so in eternity.

III. Hades offers a second chance for unbelievers.

A. Universalism, Apocatastasis, Restitution of All Things.

1. Definition of the theory:
The destiny of mankind cannot end in dualism. Ultimately all men must be saved, either by an evolutionary process of corrective punishments or by a second opportunity to hear and accept the Gospel. Opportunity for education and progress must be as lasting as man himself. Both the goodness of God and the moral worth of man make a return of every soul to God possible.

2. Chief representatives of this theory:

a. Neo-Platonic philosophy assumes a gradual return of the estranged soul to God. Clement of Alexandria taught that the Gospel was preached in hades. (Ante-Nicene Fathers, I., 490 f; 564; 575) The two Gregorys. Especially Origen, the chief representative of the Alexandrian School which was definitely Neo-Platonic in its view concerning the origin and final destiny of the soul. Origen seems to have believed the final conversion of Satan. (Ante-Nicene Fathers, IV, 327; 345)

b. The mystics assumed the possibility of every soul's union with God. The Anabaptists Denk and Hetzer (Plitt, Einleitung zur Augustana, II, 418). Jacob Boehme taught a modified universalism. Theosophy teaches the inexorable law of Karma.

c. Rationalistic Protestants, Bishop Martensen, etc., (Concordia Theol. Mag., VIII, 214.)

d. The Universalists. The end of creation must be a redeemed human race. Sociology teaches the solidarity of the human race and repudiates the dualistic end of mankind. The goodness of God forbids the belief in the eternity of hell. (Cf. Pop. Symb., 405, ff.) -- On the entire section read: Eddy, American Church History Series, X, 255 ff.)

3. Arguments for this theory:
a. "Scriptural" - Acts 3, 21 (but "restitution" refers to the establishment of God's kingdom); Rom. 5, 18 and Col. 1, 20 (but the objective justification must be distinguished from the subjective); Rom. 11, 32; Matt. 17, 11; 1 Cor. 15, 28; Eph. 1, 10 and Phil. 2, 11 (But subjugation is not conversion. 1 John 1, 7.)

b. Rationalizing - Endless torment is incompatible with God's infinite love. - The saints' bliss would be imperfect if part of humanity were in torments. - The Greek "forever" denotes a long time, but not eternal.

4. Refutation: Amos 8, 11f. Acts 14, 16; Eph. 4, 17f. Rom. 1, 18-32. Triglotta 1081, 57ff.
The concept of sin as rebellion against God. - The concept of unbelief as rejection of God's grace. - Infinite grace does not exclude absolute justice.

B. Gospel-preaching after death for unbelievers

1. Definition of the theory:
There is no second opportunity for those who once believed or who had a chance to believe. (2 Cor. 6, 2; Heb. 4, 1.) The second chance is open only to such as through no fault of their own did not hear the Gospel. -- Unbelief - not ignorance - is the only ground for man's eternal damnation. Unbelief however is a conscious, deliberate, actual rejection of the Gospel. Such a rejection of the Gospel is possible only, when man has actually heard the Gospel and had an opportunity to decide for or against it. -- The positive approach to the theory of Gospel - preaching after death is as follows: God wants all men to be saved. Salvation is possible only through the means of grace. Since not all have the opportunity here, another opportunity must be provided after death. -- When does the Gospel-preaching take place? The unbelievers of the Old Testament had the opportunity at the time of Christ's Descent into Hell. Those who have died since then may have their second chance either immediately after death or at the time of Christ's Second Coming.

(Note: The Arminians and Quakers solve the problem of "giving all men an opportunity to hear the Gospel" by assuming an "inner light." Through this "inner light " every human being receives the knowledge necessary to salvation without actually having heard the Gospel.)

2. Arguments for this theory:

If John 3, 16.17; 12, 46,47; Acts 4, 12 are true, then God's justice and mercy demands that all men must have the means of grace brought to them.

Matt. 12, 31.34. Whenever the last stage of obduracy has not been reached, then there is a possibility of forgiveness after death. (Luke 23, 34) - Is. 52, 10. The heathen did not see the Gospel during their lives, though they tried, therefore they will see the salvation of God after death. -- Matt. 24, 14 "unto all nations," i.e., either here or in the hereafter. -- 1 John 2, 2. Rom. 5, 18. Rom. 3, 29.30. -- Matt. 10, 20-24. (Tyre and Sidon would have repented. More tolerable on judgment.)

1 Pet. 3, 19. Christ's preaching was Gospel-preaching, not only for the believers of the Old Testament (Limbus Patrum of the Roman church), but also the unbelievers. The Noachites were the grossest example of unbelief, and if the Gospel was preached to them, then also to other unbelievers, cf. 4,6.

1 Cor. 15, 29. The Baptism for the dead makes possible the application of the means of grace by proxy to departed unbelievers.

3. Representatives of this theory:

Ziethe (Lamm Gottes, 723ff.): Christ is the Savior of all men. But how shall they believe without hearing? Therefore Christ descended into hell to preach the Gospel.

Th. Traub (Von den Letzten Dingen, 34, 84-98) distinguishes between those who died in unbelief and those who were not called in this world. The Gospel is preached to the latter. (1 Pet. 3,19; Eph. 4,9; Phil. 2,10; Rev. 5,13; 20,14.)

Dorner: The absolute character of Christianity demands that no one can be judged, unless the Gospel was brought to him. Examples: The heathen ..... In Christianity those who did not have a chance to learn the true character of the Gospel.... Infants have not had the opportunity for a personal choice. Therefore a chance after death. (cf. Traub, l.c. 92).

Kliefoth, L.u.W., 34,71. Schleiermacher: No dualistic ending for mankind's history.

P. Althaus (Die Letzten Dinge) Everybody must meet his "crisis" (cf. Barth). The general call is extended to all men and demands of all a decision whether they wish to serve God or the world. The idea of a "crisis" is evident in all religions. The "for-or-against-Christ" may be determined by the individual's attitude over against the measure of light given to him, or he may receive another opportunity after death. (p. 181.218).

Ludwig Schneller, cf. C.T.M., 1936 - 443.

Lutheran Companion (Augustana Synod) 5/14/1932: Is there a chance for heathen after death? "We instinctively hope so, and believe so." -- 12/7/1935: The editor quotes approvingly Sodergren's statement in "The Future Life", 1 Pet. 4,6 teaches that the Gospel is preached after death. (Sodergren is teacher at Lutheran Bible Institute, Minneapolis.)

Dr. Haas in "Truth of Faith", cf. Theol. Month. VII, 160.

Evangelical Synod: By his descent into hell Christ became Savior of all men and established the prophetic office (Irion, Kat. Erkl. 130. Ev. Cat. Au. 67.).

The Irvingites, Cf. Pop. Symb., p. 326. -- The Seventh-day Adventists (but compare next section on soul-sleep.) -- Swedenborgians, Pop. Symb., p.394. -- Russellism, p. 414ff.

4. Refutation.

a. Scripture does not teach conversion after death in I Pet. 3,19.20.

pneumasin- (N.B. A preachingduring Christ's "premundane" existence is excluded by the context. poreuthosis denotes Christ's going to a specific locality, viz., to the prison.)

The term need not be restricted to Noah's unbelieving contemporaries, especially in view of the omission of the article with apeithesasin. The Noachites are an outstanding example of the unbelievers' conduct over against the longsuffering of God andthence of the guilt of all who reject the grace of God.

kerussein - (to perform the duties of a herald, e.g., to declare war,resp. peace. In the N.T. it is used without an object to denote Gospel-preaching in Matt.11,1; Rom.10,14, etc., but usually the object denoting the contents of the proclamation is added, e.g., Matt.3,1.2; Acts 28, 31; Luke 4,43; 8,1. But the term is also used to denote other proclamation, e.g., Acts 10,42; 15,21; Rom.2,21. Therefore the thought of Gospel-preaching is not in the verb itself, but this concept isderived from the context. (Cf. Thayer's Lexicon.)

Christ's preaching in hell was a proclamation of judgment: 1) the verb is used without an object; 2) If it had been Gospel -preaching the results of such preaching would be indicated; 3) The entire context speaks of judgment and condemnation upon the unbelievers, cf. v.16. chap.4,5 (also 2 Pet. 2,5) The Christians were in danger of denying the faith because of the fierce persecutions and the apparent victory of the unbelievers. "Is the Gospel worthwhile?" Answer: In spite of the temporary triumph of the enemies of the Gospel the Christians should cling to the Gospel as the only means of the soul's salvation shall triumph. This is evident from the example of the believers who in previous times have saved their souls through the Gospel and from the unbelievers on whom a terrible judgment has been pronounced. ch.4,6.

This is in accord with Col.2,15; Eph. 4,8. Cf. Theol. Quarterly, XV,225; C.T.M. III,326; Luth. Wit.,1920, 147-164; Walther-Dau, Law and Gospel, 319-322.)

b. The theory is contrary to passages which teach a judgment immediately after death. Hebr.9-12. Study the context of John 3,18. (unbelievers judged already.)

c. The theory does violence to the Scriptural definition of unbelief. Scripture does not make a distinction between ignorance and unbelief. Unbelief is a damnable sin, because it rejects the Gospel. -- There are no grades of unbelief. Luke 11, 23. (Either -- or, no neutral ground!) - There is no excuse for "ignorance," Rom. 1, 28; 2. Thess. 2, 10-12; John 16, 3; 17 3. (Knowledge is life; ignorance damnation. 1. Cor. 1, 21.

d. The commission to preach the Gospel to all men lest through our neglect people be lost would lose all force and meaning, if there is a second chance. Acts. 26, 18; Ez. 3, 17 - 19; 2. Tim. 4, 1.2; 1. Tim. 4, 15-16.

e. This theory leads to security. Any doctrine which leads to security is inherently false.

f. The theory is rationalistic. This wish (salvation for the heathen) is the father of the thought.

Note: It is not our duty to investigate the hidden will of God, viz., How God will deal with the heathen. We must exercise our faith in considering the justice of God in the damnation of the heathen, who are without excuse. Acts. 14, 16.17; Rom. 1, 19.20; Eph. 4, 17-19. -- We are directed to the revealed will of God and to work out our salvation with fear and trembling. This is an admonition to be zealous in mission work.

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IV Psychopannychism (psuche - pan - nux, the soul sleeps through the night.)

1. The theory: Through death the soul enters into a state of total unconsciousness from which it does not awaken until judgment.

2. Representatives of this theory.
   a. It was held by some in the early church. Cf. Eusebius, Eccl. History, Vi, 37.
   b. The Anabaptists. John Calvin's first theological treatise was against psychopannychism.
   c. The Adventists. The soul is inherently mortal. Immortality will be bestowed only at Christ's second coming upon those who will pass the judgment.

Note: Luther has been charged with the teaching that the soul is unconscious. Luther's interest in emphasizing the soul's sleep was his opposition to Rome's error of purgatory. Even as there is life and activity during the natural sleep (dreams) without the sleeper being conscious of what is going on outside of himself, so also the blessed dead are in a mode of existence which we cannot understand.

3. Refutation. see Notes p. 7. 8. Note: The Neo-Platonic view that the body is a prison-house for the soul is responsible for the view that the soul is more conscious in the immediate state than in the natural life.

V. Transmigration. Reincarnation. Metempsychosis.

1. Reincarnation is the theory that the soul passes from one body to another for the purpose of ethical development. Karma (i.e., an act) or the sum total of man's acts, will determine the lot of the soul in the succeeding existence. The inexorable law of Karma governs each of the countless rounds of transmigrations until the soul acquires the true knowledge of its freedom. (Nirvana)

2. History:
   a. According to the Egyptians the soul's journey ended either in union with God, or in metamorphosis.

   b. According to Buddhism and Hinduism there is no unmerited happiness nor misery. Each soul shapes its destiny to the minutest detail. Emphasis on asceticism.

   c. Evidences of this theory among the Gauls (Druids, Gal. Wars, VI, 14)

   d. The Modern Theosophical Societies, Blavatsky, Olcott, Besant, Rosicrucians.

3. Refutation:

   a. The Bible knows nothing of the theory. (The Pharisees may have believed it, likewise Herod, Mt. 14, 2. The common people identified John with Elijah for other reasons. Mark 6, 16 f; 8, 28; Mt. 16, 14.) -- It is contrary to Scriptures, e.g., the conscience accuses the individual for the deeds done in the body. 1 Cor. 8, 18; 2 Cor. 5, 10; 1 Tim. 4, 2. -- It denies the doctrine of original sin by teaching that evil deeds are the result of a previous existence.

   b. The theory is pagan. Dualistic (the soul seeks a new body, sometimes in vain); Pantheistic (The Karma theory denies the personal existence of the soul); Fatalistic (Every deed and experience is the result of previous deed without however knowing the reason for the punishment or the reward); Immoral (Modern Theosophists teach "soul-marriages"); Cruel (There is no sympathy for the unfortunate neighbor, because his plight is the result of Karma. Caste-system in India); Evolutionistic; Naturalistic (Work-righteousness is a prominent feature. Asceticism among the Hindus); Pessimistic (It must drive to despair, because man is endlessly hurried along the path of repeated sufferings and death.)

   c. The theory is unreasonable. The purpose of the theory is said to be development. There could be no reasonable development unless there would be definite knowledge of the experience gained in a previous existence. -- If there is no consciousness of guilt then there can be no responsibility.

d. According to body and soul. Rom. 8, 23; 1 Cor.15,43;Phil.3,21.

e. There are degrees of glory, though not of salvation.1 Cor.15, 41.42.

f. Eternal. The idea of timelessness is beyond our conception. Rev. 10, 6. (R.V. "delay" chronos shall be no more.) An eternal presence.

V. The practical value of the doctrine of Christ's Second Coming.

1. The end of the world will manifest God's glory, for in the destruction of the universe He manifests His truthfulness; His almighty power; His justice; and especially His grace and mercy.
2. This doctrine is written for our
   a. Warning. The Christians must constantly keep eternity in mind;
   b. Encouragement to be active in sanctification, missions;
   c. Comfort. Emphasis must be placed on the yonder-worldliness. 2 Tim. 1, 12.

VI. — 17 —

This is to be added between pp. 16 and 18.

VI. Spiritism.

1. Definition: a) the departed spirits take their mundane experiences into the future life. On the basis of the past and of additional experiences in the disembodied state they are in a position to counsel man. b) The disembodied spirits can communicate with men and thus become sources of divine revelation. c) The disembodied spirits continue their development.
2. History: Fetishism; Shamanism; Ancestry-worship; Necromancy in the O.T.; Superstition (spooks, especially in connection with Rome's Purgatory); -- Swedenborg (Law of Correspondence, i.e., man has a counterpart in the spirit world); Shakers (Ann Lee the medium between the physical and the spirit-world); the Fox sisters and Modern Spirit(ual)ism.
3. Refutation: The departed know nothing of our condition: Is. 63, 16. - There is no need of additional revelation, Luke 16, 27-29. - Consulting the dead is a Satanic practice, Deut. 18, 10-12; Ex. 22, 18. - The witch at Endor did not bring forth Samuel's spirit. - Spiritism's disastrous effects on men's minds manifest its Satanic origin.

THE SECOND COMING OF CHRIST

I. The certainty of Christ's second coming.
II. The time of the Second Coming.
III. The manner of the Second Coming.
IV. The purpose of Christ's return.
V. The practical value of the doctrine of Christ's second coming.

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I. The certainty of Christ's Second Coming.

1. Especially in the last discourses the Savior repeatedly pointed to His second coming. Matt. 25, 31.32; 24,3.30.33. 37.39; 26, 64; Mark 13, 26; Luke 21, 27. 36.(Luke 12,40) -- The angel at Christ's ascension, Acts 1, 11. -- The Apostles, 1 Thess. 4, 16; 2 Thess. 2, 1. 8; 1 Cor. 1, 7; Titus 2, 13; 2 Tim. 4, 8; Phil. 3, 20; Heb. 9, 28; Rev.1,7;et

   Note: Four words are used to denote the Lord's return: a) Parousia, (used in Koine to denote the advent of a king) Matt. 24, 3. 27. 37. 39; 1 Thess. 2, 19; 3, 13; 4, 15; 5, 23. 2 Thess. 2, 1. 8; 2 Pet. 3, 4. -- b) epiphaneia, 1 Tim. 6, 14; 2 Tim. 1, 10; 4, 1. 8; 2 Thess. 2, 8; Titus 2, 13. -- c) apokalypsis, 1 Cor. 1, 7; 2 Thess. 1, 7; 1 Pet. 1, 7.13; 4, 13. (b and c denote the revelation of Christ's glory.--- d) phanerosis (Christ is even now present with us, but invisibly. At His return His glory shall appear to all men.) The verb is used in Col. 3, 4; 1 Pet. 5, 4.

2. The analogy of faith.

   a. The second coming and the final judgment is completion of the Savior's redemptive work. John 14, 1-3; Matt. 35, 31. 34. 46b; 1 Cor. 15, 24-38; Is. 53, 10b; 22, 22; 1 Pet. 1, 5-9; Eph. 4, 30.

   b. The glory of Christ as the Savior and King of kings shall be revealed before the entire world. Rev. 1, 7; 2 Thess. 2, 10; Mark 13, 26; Tit. 2, 13 (the emphasis is on "hope" and "Savior.")

   c. The doctrine of the Second Coming can be understood correctly only if it is viewed in its correct relation to the doctrines of the atonement and of justification.

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II. The time of Christ's second coming.

A. The exact time has not been revealed. Matt. 24, 36; Mark 13, 32; Luke 12, 40; Acts 1, 7.

Antitheses.

1. Some of the church fathers believed in dispensationalism, i.e., Six important periods in the history of the world precede the last or "Sabbath" dispensation.

2. Time-setters who arbitrarily interpret the prophecies in Ez. 38; Daniel 7-9; Rev. 20. Samples of time-setting:

a. At Augustine's time Is. 61, 2 (the year of the Lord) was interpreted to mean that the mission-work of the church would continue for a "year", i.e., 365 years. Others in the ancient church believed that the return would occur 1000 year after the ascension. Chrysostom assigned 1343 years to the Old Testament dispensation and the same number to the New Testament. Other dates 1435; 1495; 1500; 1526; 1530; 1551; etc. etc. (Cf. Gerhard, Loci, IX, 74ff.) J.A.Bengel (author of Gnomon) expected the beginning of the millenium in 1836; The Daechsel Bibelwerk in 1896. (Omitted from recent editions); The Catholic Apostolic Church, etc.

Note: The majority of the Lutheran theologians avoided all attempts at interpreting the difficult passages containing prophecies as to "time." Luther's Table-Talks, Weimar Ed; I, 453; III, 173, refer to the nearness of the Last Day. ("Wir wollens nicht erraten noch wissen, sondern Busze tun und beten.")

b. The method of modern time-setters.

1) The exact time of many importan catastrophes was foretold. The Deluge; The destruction of Pharao and the deliverance of Israel, Gen. 15, 13; -- The destruction of the Canaanites at the end of Israel's wandering through the wilderness; The Babylonian captivity (cf. Dan. 9, 2).

2) Therefore the exact time of other important events must also have been prophecied. The birth of Christ, 70 weeks, 490 days, i.e., years, from the prophecy Dan. 9, 24. Cp. Daechsel Bibelwerk ad locum where this passage is used to prophecy the martyrdom of Stephen. -- The Baptism of Christ in Dan. 9, 26. 69 weeks, i.e., 483 from the time when the commandment to build the temple was given; The destruction of the papacy, Dan. 7, 24-26 in connection with Rev. 11, 2 denotes 3 1/2 years, 42 months, i.e., 1260 days or years. The papacy was established with the defeat of the Ostrogoths in 538 but lost its power when Pius IV was captive in France, 1798. Another time-setter proves from the same prophecy, that the destruction of the papacy and the end of the world will occur in 1992, the starting-point being the time when the Carolingians lost their prestige. Time-setting very prevalent during World War. Gaebelein, old editor of Our Hope. Cf. Graebner, Prophecy and the War.

The Adventists: Dan. 8, 13.14. From the command to rebuild Jerusalem (457) to the "cleansing of the sanctuary", i.e., the second coming of Christ and the judging of the nations which did not observe the Sabbath, there are 2340 days or years, viz., 1843 or better 1844 (the year One B.C. and A.D.)

The Russellites (Millennial Dawn, Jehovah's Witnesses, Bible Students)

The Three Eras

"The world that was."2 Pet. 3, 6	De lu ge	The present evil world Gal. 1,4.	Chris- tian Har- vest 1874- 1914	The world to come,i.e, the Millennium and the ages to come

Patriarchal — Jewish, ending with the Jewish Harvest, 30-70 A.D. — Christian, divided into seven periods under Paul, John, Arius, Valdes, Wycliffe, Luther, Russell

The "times" of the Gentiles" (seven "times" or 7 x 360 = 2520 years) began in 606 B.C., the destruction of Jerusalem and will ther efore end in 1914. Russell's failure to prophecy the end of the world is covered up by the claim that Satan's rule has ceased in heaven. (Cf. Russell, The Millennial Dawn; The Time is at Hand; Judge Rutherford, The Kingdom, etc.)

Chiliasm, both Postmillennialism and Premillennialism, attempt time-setting insofar that the time of the second coming can be known during the millennium. (This point will be discussed under IV.)

B. The nearness of the Lord's Second Coming.

1. Scriptural proof. Luke 21, 35; Matt. 24, 27 (Suddenness); v. 44. 1 Thess. 5, 2.4; 2 Pet. 3, 10; Rev. 16, 15; 1 Pet. 4, 7; James 5, 8; 1 John 2, 18; Rev. 22, 20.

Note: Did the Apostles expect the Lord's return during their own lives or at least immediately after their death? Did the early church (about 60) give greater emphasis to eschatology than at a later period (about 90)? Answer: a) The Apostles teach that we must so live as though the Lord will come any day. 1 John 2, 28; 2, 3.4., etc. b) But the entire New Testament also teaches that the Lord's coming may be postponed. Cp. 2 Tim. 4, 6; 2 Thess. 2, 3, especially 2 Pet. 3, 3-10. Explain Mark 9, 1; Mark 13, 30; Study Matt 25, 5; 24, 45-49; Luke 19, 11.12. (What is the "kingdom of God"?) c) Did the Apostles believe that the signs preceding the Lord's coming were being fulfilled during their li.

Matt. 24, 14. Did the Apostles believe that they had carried the Gospel to all Gentile nations? The hope of the Lord's early return spurned the Apostles to tremendous activity and the Gospel was soon spread over the then-known world (Spain, Africa, China, India). Matt.24,6.

The fact of a long and protracted waiting for the Lord's coming dare not cradle us into security. Cf. Trigl. 458, 15.

2. Signs of the Lord's Second Coming. (Our study will be restricted to the so-called remote signs and omit the signs in Luke 21, 25 ff.)

a. Signs in the physical world. The general aging of the world is apparent in frequent earthquakes and in the weakening of the human race. (The mortality rate is raised in the lower brackets. Observe the appearance of new plagues, heart-disease, cancer, when other plagues are conquered by medicine.)

b. Signs in human society. Human relations are not improving socially nor economically. Cycles of panics. -- Instead of international peace as advocated by the Interchurch World Movement about 1910 there is international fear, jealousy, race in armaments, invention of increasingly deadly and inhuman machines of war. Cf. Matth. 24,6 and parallel passages.

Materialism. What is the point of comparison in Matth. 24, 36 ff? Cycles of wickedness, especially after great wars. Compare the moral conditions in 1648 or 1790 in America with conditions throughout the world in 1918. No definite standard of morality. Compare our urban civilization with that of Sybaris, Corinth, Rome.

c. Signs in the ecclesiastical world.

(1) The increase both in the number and in the vehemence of errors within visible Christendom. 2. Tim. 3, 1-5. Matth. 24, 5. 11. While the rise of errorists and false prophets refers first of all to the times immediately preceding the destruction of Jerusalem, the context in Matth. shows that Jesus is speaking of the same signs as preceding His second coming. Cp. Dan. 11, 45-12,3; Luke 18, 8;1. John 2, 18 f. 2. Pet. 3,3. Rev. 13, 8.12. While all these signs have been fulfilled in the past, few - if any-periods in the history of the church have witnessed such universality and such a variety of errors and manifestations of rationalism as our age. (Means of communication, radio, etc.) The more generally the Gospel is spread throughout the world the greater is the opposition to it.

(2) The great persecution. Matt. 24,9.10; Mark 13,9ff; Rev. 11,7; 12,12. In spite of great efforts toward unionism there are untold schism in visible Christendom.

(3) The preaching of the Gospel in all the world, Matt. 24,14. True, this prophecy refers to an immediate sign of Jerusalem's destruction and was literally fulfilled by 70 A.D. But we must observe the similarity in the signs preceding the destruction of Jerusalem and those prior to judgment day.

(4) Investigate the statement that Dan. 2,40-43 predicts the destruction of the Roman Empire, which is represented today in the papacy.

(5) The revelation of the Antichrist. 2 Thess. 2,2ff. (Cp. also Dan. 8,25; Rev. 14,6-8.)

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The Scriptural characterization of the Antichrist: (especially 2 Thess. 2; Dan. 11,36-39; Rev. 13,11-16; 17,1-18.)

2 Thess. 2,3: The man of sin. (anthropos does not necessarily refer to an individual.) The Antichrist will lead his followers into sin and perdition. While this prophecy fits also other forms of apostacy, it accurately foretells the anti-Scriptural doctrines of the papacy, viz., condemnation of the doctrine of justification (Coun. of Trent, Sess. VI, Can.II); elevation of saints as intercessors and thus robbing Christ of His glory; making salvation uncertain; changing repentance into a threefold human work, contrition, confession, satisfaction, etc.

v.4: opposeth and exalteth. Samples of the papacy's arrogant claims: He arbitrarily dispenses from (1) God's commandments and substitutes human laws, e.g., celibacy, fasting, and demanding obedience on pain of excommunication; (2) Demands respect and obedience which is due only unto God. Infallibility decree. "Treasury of the Church". Claims right to exercise the ban. Interdict. (3) Unam sanctam, claims both swords and makes submission to papacy an indispensable requisite of salvation. Demands immunity and the right to crown and depose rulers. (Cp. "Passional Christi et Antichristi.") Elevates saints. All this takes place in the church. (cp. Dan. 9, 27; Matt. 24,15.)

v.6.7: While this antichristian spirit was already present in Paul's time, the Roman government would not permit the papacy to manifest its vicious power until about 600. This part of the prophecy restricts the description to the papacy.

v.8.9: Revelation of Antichrist (cf. Rev. 12,5.) and destruction through the Lord's coming. This has been fulfilled through the Lutheran Reformation where the papacy lost its power when Luther attacked the central dogma of Rome: Sacerdotalism. But the papacy has survived and in part regained its original power. -- The only means of combating the Anti-Christ is the preaching of the Gospel.

(6) The Jews remain as a sign of the Lord's coming. Matt. 24, 34. Having rejected Christ as the Savior who had been promised to the Jews, the Jews lost their nation but shall continue as a race. Study characteristics of the Jewish race, such as their obduracy, aloofness.

III. THE MANNER OF CHRIST'S COMING.

1. The signs which immediately precede the Lord's coming. Read Matt, 24, 29.30; Luke 21, 25.26. (These signs are to be distinguished from such as are taking place throughout the New Testament era, for they occur after the days of tribulation, Matt. 24, 29.)

   a. Signs in creation above us. Not an ordinary eclipse. Stars, moon, sun are thrown off their course.

   b. In the creation around us. The earth shall lose its power to withstand the raging ocean. -- Men shall die of heart-failure (Luke 21, 26. apopsycho to be distinguished from fainting in Matt. 28, 4.)

   c. "Sign of the Son of Man" seems to be a peculiar sign and not the appearance of Christ. Cf. Matt. 24, 30. Will a special sign announce the arrival of Christ as did the Star of the East announce the birth of Christ?

2. The second coming is visible. Acts 1, 11; Matt. 24, 30; 26, 64; Mark 13, 26.

3. Christ's second coming will be exceedingly glorious. Luke 9, 26; Matt. 24, 30; 25, 31.

4. Suddenly, as a snare (Luke 21, 35); as lightning (Luke 17, 24); as a thief (1 Thess. 5, 2.4.); as travail (1 Thess. 5, 3.) Cf. also Luke 12, 42 - 46; Matt. 24, 48 - 51; 25, 1 - 10. Men will go about their work as usual, when suddenly the end will come upon them!

5. According to both natures. The same who ascended. This is part of His kingly office, which is performed according to both natures (Genus apotelesmaticum.)

IV. THE PURPOSE OF CHRIST'S SECOND COMING.

A. Christ's coming is the judgment of the quick and the dead.

   1. Certainty of the judgment. Old Testament passages: Gen. 18, 25; Job 35, 14; Ps. 7, 12; 1 Sam. 2, 10; Eccl. 11, 9; 12, 4; Is. 66, 15. New Testament passages: Matt. 7, 22. 23; 10, 15; 25, 31-46; Luke 10, 12.14. Acts 17, 31; 2 Cor. 5, 10; Jude 14; Rev. 20, 11-13.(Cf. L.u.W., 38, 132-142: Der Tag des Herrn in alttestamentlichen Weissagungen.) -- Man's conscience testifies to the certainty of a final judgment, Rom. 2,15.--Human reason can conclude that a judgment must come in which the injustices of this life shall be adjusted. -- The world's

great catastrophes are a constant reminder of a final judgment, especially the Deluge, Sodom, Niniveh. (N.B. Evident signs and marks of these catastrophes are deposited and found by science. Archeology.) (Cf. Ebeling, Der Menschheit Zukunft, 86-94.)

2. The standard of the judgment:
Not the attitude over against the Law. (The Adventists make parts of the ceremonial Law, the Romanists the commandments of the church, and the natural religion man's good works, the standard of the judgment.)

But man's attitude over against the Gospel.
a. Jesus is the Judge. The last act of His mediatorship is in conformity with His entire redemptive work. This means that the believers will enter life without an embarrassing investigation, while the unbelievers remain under the curse of the Law, because they have rejected the Gospel. (There is no contradiction between Matt. 25, 35-40 and John 3, 18; 5, 24.)

b. Jesus is judge also according to the human nature. The same God-man who redeemed the world will also judge the world. Acts 17, 31.

B. The world shall be destroyed by fire. 2 Pet. 3, 7-13; Is. 65, 17; Rev. 21, 1.18.19; 7, 17.

The nature of the fire:

1. A purifying fire. As our bodies decay in order to come forth as the same bodies in glorification, so also the world must pass through a cleansing and renewing process. Ps. 102, 25.26. The mode of existence, the experiences and the hopes of the individual must be no different from those of the universe as a whole. (Microcosm vs. macrocosm.) Rom. 8, 19-23: Since creation groans because of man's sin, therefore the entire creation must also rejoice with man in his liberation. (Cf. Stoeckhardt, Roemerbrief, 377f.) This view is held by many theologians since Irenaeus.

2. A consuming (destroying) fire. The cosmos was assigned to man for a twofold purpose: a) to serve man in supplying him with everything he needs for his body: b) as a means whereby He can recognize the existence and certain attributes of God. - There is no need for either of these purposes after the judgment, and therefore the expressions "new heaven and new earth" are figurative and poetical language.(Gerhard,Loci,IX, 155ff.)

N.B. The question is unimportant, so long as we emphasize the true character of heaven, viz., to be with the Lord, and avoid all carnal conceptions of heaven.

Antithesis: "Secular" Chiliasm denies the final destruction of the world. The Social Gospel (Modernism) and evolution teach a gradual progress toward perfection in all social, economic, intellectual, and moral relations. - Recent events have led to a pessimistic philosophy, because man finds himself utterly unable to cope with the manifold problems resulting from sin.

C. The believers shall enter everlasting life and the unbelievers everlasting damnation.

1. Scripture leaves no room for a millennium. Three main groups of Chiliasts:

a. Speculations based on enthusiasm (special revelations) and on Judaistic hopes (the church a religio-political society) e.g.Montanists, Anabaptists, Russellites, Mormons.

b. The hope that Rev. 20 promises a period (probably very brief) of tremendous expansion and relatively universal supremacy of the church. (Martensen, Spener, Loehe).

c. Speculations based on literalism. Distinguish two groups:

1) Postmillennialists. The O.T. prophecies which speak of spiritual glory of the church are interpreted to indicate that the N.T. church will succeed in establishing a kingdom of perfect peace and sinlessness. The scheme: After (post) the church has completed its work of preparing the world through the preaching of the Gospel (the millennium), the Lord will return for the judgment. (Refutation: This is in direct contrast to the many prophecies of Christ concerning the conditions immediately preceding the Lord's coming.)

2) Premillennialists. The O.T. prophecies, e.g., Is. 11, 1-9; 35, 1, chs. 58-66; Ps. 2; Dan. 2, 44. describe Christ's kingdom as a temporal and earthly kingdom. This kingdom has "come nigh" unto the Jews, Matt. 3,2 Luke 10, 9; but when Israel rejected Christ, the kingdom was (at least temporarily) withdrawn from the Jews. But since Christ"was born" and "died" as "King of the Jews," and since the kingdom was promised to this nation, therefore the establishment of His kingdom in the world as a visible kingdom embracing the Jews must be a future event. - A distinction must be made between the Church, which was established at Pentecost and which is only of a transitory nature (the kingdom of Heaven) and the Kingdom of the Millennium. Luke 1, 32; 1 Cor.15, 25; Ps. 72, 11; Rev. 11, 15, etc. - In short, the entire theory is based on arbitrary and literalistic interpretation. (Cf. Blackstone, Jesus is Coming; Brownville, The Romance of the Future, passim. C.T.M., VI, 166ff.

The majority of Premillennialists are Dispensationalists, who arbitrarily divide the history of the world into 7 periods. One group divides the world into eras according to such arbitrary principles as: Every period is introduced by an act of God giving "light"(the light of creation, of the burning bush, of fiery tongues on Pentecost, of Christ's Second Coming' ; another group claims that each dispensation closes with a catastrophe. (N.B. God deals differently with men of each dispensation. Cf. Pop. Symb.,368ff.)
The events of the seventh dispensation. See chart.

2. Immediately after the judgment the unbeliever shall enter into eternal damnation.

a. Scriptural definition of damnation. Fire: Is. 66, 24; Matt. 3, 10.12; 13, 40.50; Mark 9, 48. Everlasting contempt: Dan. 12, 2. Despair and eternal fury: Matt. 8, 12 ("gnashing of teeth!") Hopelessness: Rev. 14, 10.11. Separation from God: Matt. 25, 46a. Eternal destruction: 2 Thess. 1, 8.9. Matt. 7, 13; 2 Pet. 2, 1-12. "The damned do not live andyet they cannot die; they are not dead, and yet they cannot live."

b. Eternal. Matt. 25, 46; 2 Thess. 1, 9; Dan. 12, 2; Rev. 14, 2. These are not figures of speech. The eternity of the damned is of the same endlessness as the bliss of the saints.

Objections: (1) The eternity of hell is incompatible with the love of God. (Answer: True, the thought of damnation is frightful. But a denial is predicated on the failure to recognize the horribleness of sin, viz., as damnable unbelief. (Cf. Rom.6,23.) Unbelief rejects the infinite love of God which wills the sinner's eternal salvation.) (2) The saints' bliss will be imperfect, if it is marred by the knowledge that a large portion of mankind (probably even some blood-relations) is in hopeless and endless torment. (Answer: True, according to our mundane concepts it seems difficult to reconcile these two facts. But consider (a) the saints will see and adore the justice of God and (b) in the perfect communion of saints there are no longer the earthly ties.)

Restorationism or Annihilationism are not a merciful, but a cruel, theology, since they lead to carnal security.

c. According to body and soul. Matt. 20, 28.

d. Degrees of damnation. Matt. 10, 15; 11, 22.23; 23,13; Luke 12, 47.48. The manner of this difference is beyond our concept.

3. The believers shall enter into eternal bliss.

a. Faith (appropriating Christ andHis merits) will be changed to sight. 1 John 3, 2; 1 Cor. 13, 12; Matt. 5, 8; John 17, 24; Phil. 1, 23; Rev. 22, 13.14. This is a conscious and personal experience of and intimate communion with the Triune God. Heb. 4, 9 teaches that the saints participate in God's eternal rest, which is not a pantheistic mysticism (Nirvana, etc.)but an eternal activity. The Christian religion is Christo-centric and therefore our occupation in heaven will consist in praising the Triune God (election, redemption, sanctification in wider sense). Rev. 7, 10.13-16; 1 Pet. 1, 7b-8. (Perfect fulfillment of the First Table).

b. The communion of saints will be perfected. Heb. 12, 22.23; Matt. 8, 11; Luke 13, 28.29; Rev. 4, 4; 1 Cor. 13, 8a. (Perfect fulfillment of the Second Table).

c. The joys of heaven are unspeakable (aneklaletos, 1 Pet. 1, 8.) and Scriptures use mundane concepts, both negative and positive, to convey the glories and joys of heaven. (Cf. Graebner, Outlines of Theology, 243ff.)

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